Method and System for Providing Rich Media Content Over a Computer Network

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Abstract

The invention presented here is a method and system for providing rich media content over a computer network. In accordance with the invention, a server on a physical or wireless computer network polls the software, 10 hardware, or appliance of an end user on the network, for the availability of software and/or hardware necessary for the display of rich media content. This polling is transparent to the end user and requires no action on the part of the end user. Based on the client's response, the server sends an appropriately formatted version of the rich media file. The user is not necessarily aware that 15 this transfer is taking place, as it is taking place in the background, while the user is performing other tasks or viewing content other than that which is being transferred. Once the rich media has been transferred in its entirety and stored, or cached, in the local memory of the client, the rich media content is displayed automatically in a designated display area. The user may then be 20 able to manipulate the rich media content without affecting the other content or tasks that were being displayed prior to the display of the rich media content.

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